ELT research in Turkey: A content analysis of selected features of published articles

Oktay Yağız [a] *, Burcu Aydın[b], Ahmet Selçuk Akdemir[c]

[a] Ataturk University, Erzurum,Turkey
[b] Adnan Menderes University,Aydın,Turkey
[b] Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University, Ağrı, Turkey

Abstract

This study reviews a selected sample of 274 research articles on ELT, published between 2005 and 2015 in Turkish contexts. In the study, 15 journals in ULAKBIM database and articles from national and international journals accessed according to convenience sampling method were surveyed and relevant articles were obtained. A content analysis was implemented for each article in terms of subjects, research design, data collection tools, samples and data analyses through an "Article Classification Form". Results showed that Turkish ELT researchers have been mostly interested in language learning and teaching, and commonly used quantitative research designs with more often descriptive tools and analysis procedures compared to inferential analyses. Samples generally consist of undergraduate students and teachers. The main themes were found to be language learning/acquisition, language teaching and teacher education with mostly quantitative research designs between 2005-2015 years. Given the implementational components, it was seen that questionnaires were designed mostly in Likert type, sampling preference was for undergraduate students with 101-300 sample size, and most often descriptive statistical procedure were used. Moreover, some suggestions were made for ELT and applied linguistics researchers related to themes, research designs and statistical procedures.

Keywords: Content analysis, research trends, educational research, English language, ELT.

1. Introduction

Given the global importance and dominance of English in both scientific and educational domains, Turkey, currently as an EU candidate, has not refrained herself from international integration in many fields including science, education and research. Today, in Turkey, English is taught in state and private schools, colleges and universities from the early years of education. Moreover, there are over 50 ELT and English linguistics departments in Turkish universities. The availability of these educational contexts has prompted a proliferation of studies shared through publications, theses and dissertations. Given this rapidly increasing number of publications, the need and benefit of systematic information on the current research trends of a discipline at both national and international domains attract attention. In most educational disciplines such as chemistry & biology education, mathematics education and educational technology, researchers have been carrying out investigations in terms of scope, subject, content and research methods (e.g. Sözbilir, Kutu & Yaşar, 2012; Sözbilir, Kutu, &

Yaşar, 2013; Çiltaş, Güler & Sözbilir, 2012). ELT and applied linguistics researchers have been investigating research trends of articles, theses and dissertations in terms of certain perspectives as well from different research settings in the world as well. The purpose of this study is to examine the published research articles in Turkey conducted between 2005 and 2015 in the field of English language teaching and learning as a foreign language. To methodologically analyze the contents of each study, an article information form has been adapted by the researchers in terms of method preference, sampling, instrument and data analysis. As mentioned above, though English is taught in every phase of education, English teaching and learning implementations, performances and achievement at local range are less than sought. This critical situation and seeking of solutions for foreign language learning and teaching constraints make these research studies crucial. However, relevant literature shows that there is inadequate national research examination. In other words, in spite of comprehensive and long lasting foreign language learning and teaching processes and considerable number of research studies, there seems rare attention to a systematic perspective at Turkish scientific context. Therefore, attempting to characterize and identify the research trends that scholars maintain in foreign language teaching/learning and applied linguistics in Turkey will provide significant insights about the scope, relevance and methodologies of the research studies published between the years of 2005-2015. This study is expected to prompt similar and comparative studies with the published studies in different indexes. This study also aims to summarize the research context, sampling and parameters to reflect scientific research tendencies at Turkish context, to assist further studies and to enhance the strength and quality of the research field and to better understand research gaps through the highlighted findings.

1.1. Literature review

In line with the constantly increasing number of publications, the need and benefit of systematic information on the current research trends of a discipline at both national and international domains attract attention in several domains.

Surveying subject matters, research methods/designs, and data analysis procedures in disciplines are not new. Given the rationale of trend analyses, results of the analyses should be of concern not just to the publishers of journals and the practitioners of research, but also to the instructors of research methodology (Hsu, 2005).

Falkingham and Reeves (1998) suggest the contribution of summarizing a number of studies to other researchers. Likewise, it is highlighted that content analysis of scientific publications assist researchers to gain a deep insight of the developmental period and current status of research domain (Chang, Chang, & Tseng, 2010; Lee, Wu & Tsai, 2009; Tsai, & Wen, 2005; White, 1997). Content analysis studies by means of statistical implementations, besides, contribute to obtain reliable and valid generalizations in a research area (Sağlam & Yüksel, 2007).

In recent decades, the number of the investigations into the research trends of a scientific area has been observed to increase. For example relevant studies, in the field of English language teaching and learning and applied linguistics, (Hsu, 2005; Ker, Adams & Skyrme, 2013; Lazaraton, 2000; Liu & Zhang, 2015; Richards, 2009; Yihong, Lichun & Jun, 2001) have disseminated knowledge about research implementation. For instance, Lazaraton (2000) highlights one of the problematic issues that applied linguistics professionals appear to lack about their ability to carry out the empirical work. In an investigation of four applied linguistics journals including a seven-year period, she found that almost 90% of the published articles were quantitative. In the next stage, the author also examined the statistical procedures according to certain journals. She also found that nearly all of the studies were employed descriptive statistics, however, the number of the inferential statistics (e.g. ANCOVA, t test,

chi-square, factor analysis and regression analysis) was low. Lazaraton also argues that statistics should be appropriately employed with the underlying aspects and despite frequent ANOVA use she mentions her caution in terms of accuracy of the statistical procedures. Lazaraton (2005), in her subsequent study, analyzed published articles over an eleven-year period. It was seen that most of the studies (%86) in four journals under review used quantitative methodology. Lazaraton again gives a caution towards inappropriate use of statistical procedures. Likewise, Saito (1999) argues that many frequency analyses in SLA research violate the assumption of independence of data and underlines that more attention should be paid to the correct and appropriate use of statistical tests in SLA research. Johnstone (2008) reviewed research on language teaching, learning and policy published in journals within language boundaries. He holds a thematic perspective about 80 published articles. In this study, many subtitles can be seen as mentioning pedagogical issues. Yihong, Lichun and Jun (2001) compared China and the western countries in terms of research methodology trends in applied linguistics encompassing 1978–1997. They underline a shift in favour of qualitative studies and argue that 'from the mid-1990s, the percentage of qualitative studies has been approaching that of quantitative studies' (Yihong et al. 2001, p.7). Benson, Chik, Gao, Huang and Wang (2009) found that over 2200 published empirical articles in ten applied linguistics journals from 1997–2006, 22% (477/2202) were qualitative studies. Benson et al. (2009, p.89) also note that the pervasiveness of qualitative research in applied linguistics journals 'may therefore be a sign not only of greater methodological openness but also of an increased awareness of the potential contributions of other disciplines within and beyond applied linguistics'. Another researcher, Richards (2009) in his investigation of the qualitative research in language teaching since 2000, underlines implementational constraints, particularly interviews, and the researchers' lack of knowledge.

Some research findings (Cheng & Fox, 2013; Gao, Yanyi &Yuxia, 2014; Motha, 2009; Riazi & Candlin, 2014) also highlights the increase in the number of mixed research design and the need of research studies about the methodological issues.

Relevant research also focused on thematic dimension of the studies including articles and theses. Hsu (2005) examined the trends of subject investigated and research methods/designs and data analysis procedures that educational researchers employed in three educational research journals encompassing 1971-1998 period. The results showed that nearly three quarters of subject in each journal focused on psychology in education, teachers, teaching/instruction, measurement/assessment, and methods of inquiry. The author also highlights the instruction of qualitative methods since the number of the qualitative research lacks. In a similar study, Motha (2009) reviewed recent doctoral research completed between the spring of 2006 and the fall of 2007 in the areas of language teaching and language learning in the United States. Subjects of particular interest were upon language policy, second/foreign language pragmatics, and computer-mediated communication. Cheng and Fox (2013, p.519) examined a selected sample of 24 doctoral dissertations in language assessment completed between 2006 and 2011 in Canadian universities. These dissertations focused on the following thematic categories: 1) reliability, validity and factors affecting test performance; 2) washback (impact) and ethics; 3) raters, rating and rating scales; 4) classroom-based research: teaching, learning and assessment; and 5) vocabulary learning, lexical proficiency and lexical richness. The study also highlighted the sample type and stated that most of the participants were adults and only four of the studies were conducted with young learners. Gao, Liao and Li (2014) found that Chinese researchers addressing a wide range of topics including language learners' cognitive processes, their language performance, and language teachers' professional development. Research also shows that investigations focusing on comparative studies between different academic communities in the same discipline lack. Woravut (2012) compared Thai and international research articles published in English Language Teaching (ELT) in terms of research quality. The samples were 200 research articles 100 of

which were published by Thai academics and the other 100 research articles were published in international journals between 2003 and 2007. The results suggested that Thai ELT academics had a lower quality (i.e. research accuracy and appropriateness) of methodological knowledge compared to the other group.

Educational research literature shows that the research output of Turkish scholars have constantly been increasing due to probably more stringent requirements on academic output. In international journals indexed by Social Science Citation Index [SSCI] over four thousands educational research studies located in Turkey between 1997 and 2014 were published and reached the peak point in international journals (Çalık & Sözbilir, 2015). Turkish researchers' publication output has attracted international researchers' attention too. As Tseng, Chang, Tutwiler, Lin and Barufaldi (2012) indicate that while Turkey takes the 33th rank between 1990 and 1994 period, in 2011 it takes place in the 3rd rank. Turkey is in the 7th rank among 35 most productive countries in education from 1990 to 2011. (see Table 2 in Tseng et al., 2013, p.1147). Therefore, more educational research publications require further analyses in terms of different aspects.

Several studies have been conducted to examine the scientific output on educational research studies in Turkey such as science education (Çalık, Ünal, Coştu & Karataş, 2008; Erdoğan, Marcinkowsky & Ok, 2009; Sözbilir et al., 2012), mathematics education (Çiltaş et al., 2012), chemistry education (Sözbilir, Kutu & Yaşar, 2013) environmental education (Erdoğan, Marcinkowksy & Ok, 2009; Erdoğan, Uşak, & Bahar, 2013), biology education (Umdu- Topsakal, Çalık & Çavuş, 2012), educational technologies (Küçük, Aydemir, Yıldırım, Arpacık & Göktaş, 2013) and psychological counselling and guidance education (Seçer, Ay, Ozan & Yılmaz, 2014).

Some of these investigations focused on theses and these studies analysed data in terms of year, research subjects, research methodology, related analyses and samplings. The overwhelming findings showed that the use of descriptive study for the research interest and a survey for research methodology with a quantitative approach were highly common in published articles and theses.

The history of foreign language education in Turkey goes back to the nineteenth century with three significant milestones, the first of which was in the Ottoman era, Tanzimat period (1839-1876) launched a westernization period. French gained the predominance due to technological and military transfer in the land. With the foundation of missionary schools and their quality and pervasiveness in line with this European oriented change in education English took the popularity over French and other foreign languages. With the foundation of Turkish Republic and modernization efforts, this trend increasingly continued. Reform movements influenced the educational implementations too, and several types of schools launched with diverse objectives. A prominent event that alphabet was changed from Arabic to Latin in 1928 and schools were secularized occurred. Until 1980s, Turkey made effort to solve its fundamental educational challenges and constraints while they were meanwhile undergoing its reforms. With the globalization effect, foreign language education, in other words, English language education has become pervasive in school curricula. In 1997 Educational Reform, English language education policy obtained significant priorities scope and magnitude, and following the revision of 1997 reform; English took a compulsory and intensive curricular aspect. As the EU language learning standards put new educational standards, Turkey has been revising its policies to meet demands of modern era and become interested into its relevant problems. (Sarıçoban & Sarıçoban, 2012)

To achieve this, researchers have conducted many studies aiming at several questions in Turkish context and disseminated their findings up to now. Today considerable number of research studies has been published in national and international sources as theses, articles, and books. The compilation of these studies in terms of diverse variables is needed in Turkish context since there

seems a great extent of scarcity to provide new insights for researchers. However, there seem many research studies in several disciplines investigating certain perspectives such as research subjects and their methodological designs except for English language learning and teaching. This scarcity of ELT research in Turkey can be exemplified by means of Solak's (2014) investigation. Solak, seemingly as the first attempt to systematically analyse the research studies conducted in Turkish context reviewed, in his content analysis, 189 research articles published between the years of 2009-2013 in Turkish context. He found that majority of the articles were published in English, quantitative method was overwhelming employed in terms of research design, undergraduates were the focus of attention as sample type and the sample size ranging between 31 and 100 was formed.

Apart from other areas such as educational technology, chemistry, communication, and mathematics research (Alper & Gülbahar, 2009; Bozkaya, Erdem-Aydın, & Genç-Kumtepe, 2012; Göktaş et al., 2012; Gülbahar & Alper, 2009; Keser & Özcan, 2011; Sert, 2010), and psychological counselling and guidance (Seçer et al., 2014) there is a need for studies focusing on ELT and applied linguistics in Turkey providing data-based information. Therefore, identifying the components, which determine trends, will permit evaluations from different perspectives for the benefit of future researchers in the field.

1.2. Research questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions about studies focusing on ELT and applied linguistics in Turkey:

1. What is the subject distribution of the published articles in terms of years (2005-2015)?

2. What research methods have been employed in the published articles at Turkish context?(Quantitative-Qualitative-Mixed)

3. What data collection tools have been employed in the published articles at Turkish context?

4. What sample and sample size group have been employed in the published articles at Turkish context?

5. What type of data analysis procedures have been employed in the published articles at Turkish context?

2. Method

2.1. Design

Written products are often analysed by means of content analysis under the heading of historical research. As a research method, it represents a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Schreier, 2012 cited in Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utrianien & Kyngärs, 2014). In other words, such a systematic analysis converts qualitative data into quantitative data. Content analysis can be divided into "meta-analysis, meta- synthesis (thematic content analysis) and descriptive content analysis" (Çalık & Sözbilir, 2014). Thus, the current study employed a descriptive content analysis attempting to describe and quantify the methodological trends in the published articles in 2005-2015 period.

2.2. Sample / Participants

274 research articles written by Turkish authors published in 15 journals indexed by ULAKBİM [*Turkish* Academic *Network and Information Center]* were included in the study. However, to increase the number of materials, further published articles in accordance with the use convenience sampling method were also included the study. Yet, the criteria had two aspects; the studies had to be conducted by Turkish researchers and these studies had methodology.

2.3. Instrument(s)

A paper classification form [PCF], originally developed by Sözbilir et al. (2012), was employed and adapted into the field of ELT by the research team by examining the sources (websites, journals and books) in terms of the disciplinary contents of the form. The form consists of seven sections which provide descriptive information for the identification, subjects, methods, data collection tools, sample, sample sizes, and data analysis methods. The paper classification form is given in Appendix 1.

2.4. Data collection procedures

At the very outset of the analysis, all the researchers got acquainted with the content of the headings. In the case of some unfamiliarity with the research terms, necessary readings were done beforehand. Then, 28 articles (10% of the total) were randomly selected and were content analyzed together to determine the path well and strengthen the reliability. In case of disagreements or undecided situations, the research team came together and discussed to clarify the questions.

2.5. Data analysis

By means of article information form, each article was reviewed in terms of content and the data were transferred SPSS 20.0 . The results were descriptively analyzed and shown in frequency and percentage tables. Content analysis brings similar themes and concepts together and interprets in an understandable way.

3. Results

The data obtained from the analysis in ELT encompassing one decade (2005-2015) in terms of certain methodological preferences. Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of the published articles between 2005 and 2015 in terms of number of the studies.

Table 1 Frequency distribution of the published articles between 2005 and 2015.

Years	f	%
2005	23	8.39
2006	25	9.1
2007	31	11.3
2008	20	7.3
2009	26	9.5
2010	12	4.3
2011	32	11.7
2012	18	6.6
2013	33	12.0
2014	28	10.2
2015	26	9.5
Total	274	100

In the last five years, Turkish investigators seem to increase their research output, with the highest number in 2013 (%12) compared to the first half of the decade. Given the whole decade, a stable increase in the research output is generally seen.

Table 2. Frequency distribution of the published articles according to subjects

Subject of Article	f
Language Learning & Acquisition	67
Language Teaching	60
Teacher Education (Pre-service&In-service Education)	41
Higher Education	8
Applied Linguistics	15
Culture & Literature in Language Education	14
CALL	22
Language Curriculum & Teaching Material	23
Language Testing & Evaluation	12
Multimedia & ICT in Language Education	31
Research Education	2
Other	4
Total	299

Subject areas in the study were determined by means of the review of relevant literature and opinions of the expert academics. Table 2 shows the ELT Turkish researchers' research interest. As can be seen, most of the researchers seem to thematically study into language learning (f=67) and language teaching (f=60). Almost half of the examined articles are related to teacher education (f=41). The number of the other areas related to technology, curriculum, higher education and research studies appear to be low. Since one study can be related to more than one subject, percentage values were not calculated.

Table 3 Frequency distribution of the research designs

	Research Design	Research Methods	f	%
QUANTITATIVE	Experimental	True-Experimental	15	5.5
		Quasi-Experimental	8	2.9
		Pre-Experimental	0	0.0
		Single-Subject	0	0.0
		Subtotal	**23**	**8.3**
	Non-Experimental	Descriptive	75	27.4
		Comparative	21	7.7
		Correlational	21	7.7
		Survey	74	7.7
		Ex-post Facto	1	0.4

		Secondary Data Analysis	3	1
		Subtotal	**195**	**71.1**
QUALITATIVE	Interactive	Ethnography	3	1.1
		Phenomenology	2	0.7
		Case Study	32	11.7
		Grounded Theory	1	0.4
		Critical Studies	1	0.4
		Other	2	0.7
		Historical Analysis	0	0
		Subtotal	**41**	**13.1**
	Non-Interactive	Concept Analysis	2	0.7
		Review	5	1.8
		Meta-Analysis	9	3.3
		Other	10	3.6
		Subtotal	**26**	**9.5**
MIXED	Mixed	Explanatory (Quan→Qual)	27	9.9
		Exploratory (Qual→Quan)	6	2.2
		Triangulation	4	1.5
		Subtotal	**37**	**13.5**
	Total		322	100

Table 3 displays the research design trend of the published articles in ELT. Most of the studies have conducted quantitative research (%79.4) particularly with non-experimental methods (%71.1). It is also seen that Turkish researchers are seen quite reluctant about use of qualitative design (%22.6). They often prefer an interactive approach when they use qualitative studies (%13.1). Given the low number of mixed research design, the published articles do not have multiple data collection and interpretation potential (%13.5).

Table 4 Frequency distribution of the data collection tools

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS	f
QUESTIONNAIRE/SCALE	
Open Ended	13
Likert	125
Other	15
ACHIEVEMENT TEST	
Open Ended	29
Multiple Choice	11
Other	0
Perception/ Atitude/ Skill Tests	21
INTERVIEW	
Constructed	12
Semi-constructed	36
Unconstructed	13
Focus Group	5

OBSERVATION	
Participatory	9
Non-participatory	10
Alternative Tools (Diagnostic test, conceptual maps, portfolios etc)	26
Documents	29
Other	14
Total	368

As seen in Table 4, the frequency values show that the data of the published articles have been very often collected by means of questionnaires and scales (f=153) most of which are likert type questionnaires/scales (f=125). Given the qualitative studies lack then qualitative data collection tools also are seen low too. In terms of qualitative data collection tool, interviews with four types attract attention (f=66). Since more than one data collection tool may have been used in a study, percentage values were not calculated.

Table 5 Frequency distribution of the samples in the published articles

SAMPLE	f
Preschool	3
Primary (1-12)	34
Undergraduate	159
Graduate	13
Academics	28
Teachers	36
Administrators	7
Parents	1
Others	22
Total	303

Table 6 Frequency distribution of the sample size in the published articles

SAMPLE SIZE	f	%
1-10	25	9.1
11-30	47	17.1
31-100	105	38.3
101-300	61	22.2
301-1000	30	11
Over 1000	6	2.2
Total	274	100

Table 5 shows that researchers generally have studied with undergraduate students (f=159) and teachers (f=36). This finding also indicates that researchers rarely use other data sources. As for the sample size, as shown in Table 6, the majority of the samples consist of 31-100 (%38.3) and 101-300 (%22.2). Nevertheless, the researchers seem to rarely study with small groups such as 1-10 group (%9.1) and larger groups such as 301-1000 (%11) and over 1000 groups (% 2.2).

Table 7 Frequency distribution of the analyses in the published articles

ANALYSIS	f
DESCRIPTIVE	
Frequency/Percentage	154
Mean/Standard Deviation	150
Graphic Display	10
Other	3
INFERENTIAL	
t-test	74
Correlation	49
ANOVA-ANCOVA	43
MANOVA/MANCOVA	1
Factor Analysis	14
Regression	8
Chi-Square	23
Non-parametric Tests	4
Other	0
Content Analysis	63
Qualitative Descriptive Analysis	47
Other	8
Total	651

Given the data analysis techniques, the majority of studies have used descriptive, in 216 studies inferential statistical analyses have been employed. 118 studies, on the other hand, used qualitative analysis procedures. More specifically frequency and percentage are the most common descriptive analysis procedures. Regarding inferential analysis, use of t-test (f=74) appears to be most common procedure, however, the number of more sophisticated analysis procedures such as MANOVA/MANCOVA (f=1), factor analysis (f=14) and regression (f=8) are quite low.

As for the qualitative analysis types, content analyses (f=63) take place more often compared to descriptive qualitative analyses (f=47). Since more than one data analysis type may have been used in a study, percentage values were not calculated.

4. Discussion

Foreign language teaching is not a new phenomenon in Turkish context. However, despite its long history, foreign language teaching and learning, particularly English language, has been still questioned in terms of methodology, implementation and pedagogical outcome. Given this problematic situation, research studies focusing on diverse aspects of L2 teaching and learning are strongly needed. By means of disciplinary scientific research, current challenges and constraints can be minimized and optimum language teaching and learning outcomes can be able to obtained within wide range of educational settings. Research studies enlighten both current and future implementation and evaluation. Therefore, this study aimed to display the research tendency of L2 teaching and learning in Turkish context, which provides both descriptive and predictive views for researchers, practitioners and policy makers.

The distribution of the published articles between 2005 and 2015 appears to be close to each other. Though the number of the published articles is higher in 2013 (%12) compared to other years, a

balanced distribution of published articles among the years can be said. A similar result is seen in other fields' research articles in Turkish context (e.g. Gül & Sözbilir, 2015; Seçer et al. 2014).

As for the common research interest that Turkish researchers have held, language learning, language teaching and teacher education attract attention. However, the research subjects into CALL, ICT and multimedia in both implementations and materials, despite the ongoing technological improvements in Turkish educational environment have not attracted the researchers' attention. Furthermore, the subjects relevant to research studies such as scale development, higher education and testing and evaluation have been rarely studied. Interestingly, these findings are close to other disciplines of the educational research from other disciplines. (e.g. Chang et al., 2010; Çiltas et al., 2012; Englund, 2006; Hsu, Ho, Tsai, Hwang, Chu, Wang & Chen, 2012; Lee et al., 2009; Sözbilir et al., 2012; Gül & Sözbilir, 2014). These common findings from other disciplines imply that Turkish researchers need to focus on the other domains of research. This lack of research studies may be attributed to the limited research method knowledge of the Turkish researchers in terms of diverse research methods and analysis procedures. This assumption is supported by the research findings in Göktaş et al., (2012); Küçük et al.,(2013) and Gül and Sözbilir's (2015) investigations too. However, unlike the other disciplines where the proficiency of academic English appears to be as a barrier (e.g. Çiltaş, et al. 2012) for the researchers to publish does not display an unfortunate situation for ELT researchers.

Regarding the research methods, quantitative studies have been seen to predominate in the Turkish researchers' articles. Qualitative and mixed research approaches, on the other hand, have been often ignored. This tendency is supported by the other studies in other disciplines as well. (Çalık et al., 2008; Çiltaş, et al. 2012; Erdoğan et al., 2009; Göktaş et al., 2012; Gül & Sözbilir, 2014; Sözbilir et al., 2012; Seçer et al., 2014; Solak, 2014). This common preference towards quantitative methods can be due to the implementational advantages to a researcher since the findings can be easily generalized; their implementations and data collection and analyses are less demanding in terms of time, energy and money.

Given the workload of the Turkish academics' in their professional life, this reason may cause to conduct quantitative designs. However, the reason for the pervasive use of quantitative research method may be because the investigations concerned could not go beyond the description of a current situation of a phenomenon or problem. Mixed methods (%13.5), meanwhile, have been often neglected and therefore potential restrictions of the sole quantitative or qualitative studies may have been acknowledged beforehand. This tendency implies that Turkish ELT researchers are reluctant to deal with sophisticated research procedures and more complex research questions and hypotheses. Another reason why Turkish researchers in ELT tend to ignore qualitative and mixed research methods can be their cautious attitude towards qualitative and mixed research methods.

Through a wide angle lens, within quantitative research methods, Turkish ELT researchers often prefer non-experimental research designs (%71.1) where the researcher studies what naturally occurs or has already occurred; and the researcher studies how variables are related (Johnson & Christensen, 2004) in contrast to experimental and quasi-experimental designs in which cause and effect relationships between the variables are sought, manipulation of the variables considering validation processes, controlling and balancing of the confounding variables and prediction phases of analyses exist.

Qualitative studies having a postmodernist approach primarily focus on the primacy of individuality, difference, fragmentation, flux and constant change (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). In other words, qualitative studies gain comprehensive perspectives on issues or phenomena, or to gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to understand quantitatively. However, the published

articles have often ignored qualitative designs. For example, the number of the critical studies, grounded theory studies, concept analysis, and ethnographic studies appear to be very rare (%3.3) or they do not exist in the samplings. Moreover, given the few number of the meta-analyses (%3.3) in the sampling group, more meta-analysis studies are needed. Arık and Türkmen (2009) argue that the main reason for not employing qualitative methods in Turkish scholars' articles is that they perceive qualitative studies rather time consuming. In addition to this argument, the attitude of the positivist view to scientific research which underestimates qualitative method can prevent the qualitative implementation.

In line with the previous research in other disciplines in educational sciences (e.g. Alper & Gülbahar, 2009; Erdem 2011; Ozan & Köse, 2012) Turkish ELT researchers have often used quantitative data collection tools, particularly questionnaires, scales and achievement tests. Alternative tools such as diagnostic test, conceptual maps, and portfolios appear to be less frequent tools to collect data. As widely acknowledged that, in order to enhance the validity and reliability, use of more than single data collection tool is strongly recommended. However, in the analysed sample, articles generally obtained data by means of Likert questionnaire tools (f=125). This is most probably due to get as many data as possible in the shortest time. This advantage meanwhile provides a researcher with an instant analysis opportunity. Less than quantitative data collection tools, the qualitative tools including interviews (f=66) take place more than observations and alternative tools (f=45). Observation as one of the widely used data collection tool does not place in Turkish researchers' methodological agenda (f=19). This may be because of the official permission phase of the observation and the cultural conventions and perceptions.

In most of the published articles, the samples consist of undergraduate students (f=159) and teachers (f=36). This finding shows that Turkish scholars in ELT mostly pay their attention to the tertiary level except the graduate level issues and problems. This is most probably due to sample accessibility. This finding is consisted with the previous studies, (e.g. Arık & Türkmen, 2009; Çiltaş et al. 2012; Göktaş, Küçük et al. 2012; Sözbilir et al. 2012; Seçer et al. 2014; Solak, 2014). Given that foreign language education starts from earlier years from now on in Turkish context, new research studies both theoretical and empirical are needed. Therefore, researchers' attention should be directed to the early years of foreign language education, to achieve this, the researchers can be encouraged by removing the bureaucratic barriers to take official permissions to conduct research, and particularly graduate students (both MA and PhD levels) can be motivated to study into these levels when writing theses, dissertations and articles.

Regarding the sample size of the research articles, it is seen that researchers have worked with a sample group ranging between 101-300 subjects (%38.3). Working with small number of subjects in accordance with the dominance of quantitative studies and neglect of qualitative research design affect the profile of sample size as well. Further, though most of the studies are quantitative, sample sizes ranging between 301-1000 (%11) and over 1000 (%2.2) appear to be very rare.

As for the data analysis, the majority of the studies in the field of ELT were analysed by means of descriptive analysis, particularly frequency/percentage (f=154) and mean/standard deviation (f=150) displays are seen. In addition, t-test (f=74), correlation (f=49), ANOVA/ANCOVA (f=43) analyses appear to be prominent in inferential analysis group. Among the qualitative analysis types, content analyses (f=63) and descriptive analyses (f=47) are close to each other. Though most of the articles are analyzed by means of quantitative methods, the advanced analysis procedures such as MANOVA/MANCOVA have been used quite rare (f=1). This is probably due to lack of knowledge and experience of the researchers in these sophisticated types of analysis. This finding is again consistent with the research conducted by Arık and Turkmen (2009). In experimental studies in which ANCOVA is recommended to use, it is seen that t-test have been often preferred, and multivariate

analyses have been rarely used. This is most likely due to construction of the research questions according to researcher's familiar analysis procedures.

5. Conclusions

The findings of this study showed that in the published articles in the field of ELT between 2005 and 2015 have distributed in close numbers. The research subjects generally have been based upon language learning, language teaching and teacher education. Within these articles, data have been collected by means of a single design (quantitative or qualitative) and mostly by questionnaires and scale in Likert type formats. Easily accessible sampling groups and somewhat easier statistical procedures have been often preferred. However, researchers have been seen not to choose comprehensive and sophisticated topics with diverse dimensions. Further, these researchers have tended to neglect mixed research methods, which they provide more reliable results. Based on these findings, it can be suggested that the research methods knowledge and experiences of the academics and graduate students should be strengthen to be able to enhance number of the advanced statistical procedures and models with different sampling groups. In line with this, use of qualitative and mixed research designs should be increased and encouraged. Further, the number of the meta-analyses and historical research studies which examine the relationship between study features and outcomes should be emphasized. In accordance with these studies, research in the field of ELT should focus on more critical issues rather than mere identification of the target or problematic situations. For further studies, it is suggested that comparative studies investigating international authors' published articles in terms of abovementioned issues to gain deep understanding in the research domain of ELT.

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Appendix A.

A. ARTICLE INFORMATION		
1.Article name		
2.Author(s)		
3.Journal	**6.Type** ☐ a.Intern. b.Natio. ☐	
4.Year: b.Vol c.Issue	**7.Language** a.Eng. ☐ b.Turk ☐	
5.Source a. Jour.Class. SSCI ☐ b.ERIC-BEI-EI-AEI: ☐ c. ULAKBİM SBVT ☐	d.Institute/ Faculty Jo. ☐ e.Other ☐	

B. SUBJECT OF ARTICLE		
1. ☐ Learning& Acquisition	5. ☐ Applied Linguistics	11. ☐ Research Studies
2. ☐ Language Teaching	6. ☐ Cult.& Lit. in English Ed.	12. ☐ Other…………
○ ME ○ FS ○ TAT ○ TAC ○ AFI	7. ☐ CALL	
3. ☐ Teacher Education	8. ☐ Lang. Cur.& Tea. Mat.	
○ PTA ○ ISE ○ Other	9. ☐ Language Testing& Evaluation	
4. ☐ Higher Education	10. ☐ Multimedia& ICT in English Education	

C. RESEARCH METHOD

QUANTITATIVE		QUALITATIVE		MIXED
1. Experimental	**2. Non-experimental**	**3. Interactive**	**4. Non-interactive**	**5. Mixed**
11. ☐ True-Exp.	21. ☐ Descriptive	31. ☐ Ethnography	41. ☐ Historical analy.	51. ☐ Explanat.
12. ☐ Quasi-exp.	○ Longitudinal	32. ☐ Phenomenology	42. ☐ Concept Anal.	Quan - Qual
13. ☐ Pre-experim.	○ Cross-age	33. ☐ Case Study	43. ☐ Review	52. ☐ Explora.
14. ☐ Single-subject	22. ☐ Comparative	34. ☐ Grounded Theory	44. ☐ Meta-Analysis	Qual - Quan
	23. ☐ Correlational	35. ☐ Critical Studies	45. ☐ Other…………	53. ☐ Triang.
	24. ☐ Survey	36. ☐ Other……………		
	25. ☐ Ex-post Facto			
	26. ☐ Secondary Data Analysis			

D.DATA COLLECTION TOOL	E. SAMPLES	
1. ☐ Questionnaire	**a. Sample**	**b. Sample Size**
○ Open ended ○ Likert ○ Other	1. ☐ Preschool	1. ☐ bt 1- 10
2. ☐ Achievement test	2. ☐ Primary(1-12)	2. ☐ bt 11-30
○ Open ended ○ M.Choice ○ Other	3. ☐ Undergraduate	3. ☐ bt 31-100
3. ☐ Perception/Attitude/Skill etc tests	4. ☐ Graduate	4. ☐ bt 101-300
write its name……………………….…….……	5. ☐ Academics	5. ☐ bt 301-1000
4. ☐ Interview………………………	6. ☐ Teachers	6. ☐ ov.1000
○ Constructed ○ Semi-const ○ Non-constrc. ○ Focus grp..	7. ☐ Administrators	
5. ☐ Observation	8. ☐ Parents	
○ Participatory ○ Non-particip.	9. ☐ Other……………	
6. ☐ Alternative tools		
(Diagnostic test, conceptual maps, portfolios etc)		
7. ☐ Documents		
8. ☐ Other(write its name) …………………………		

F. DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS		QUAL.DATA ANALYSIS
1. Descriptive	**2. Inferential**	**3. Qualitative Analysis**
11. ☐ Frequency/Percentage Tbls	21. ☐ t-test	31. ☐ Content Analysis
12. ☐ Mean/Standard Deviation	22. ☐ Correlation	32. ☐ Qualitative Desc. An.
13. ☐ Graphic Display	23. ☐ ANOVA/ANCOVA	33. ☐ Other …………………
14. ☐ Other…………………	24. ☐ MANOVA/MANCOVA	
	25. ☐ Factor Analysis	
	26. ☐ Regression	
	27. ☐ Chi-square	
	27. ☐ Non-Parametric tests	
	28. ☐ Other…………………	

Türkiye'de İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Araştırmaları: Yayımlanan Makalelerin Belirli Özelliklerine Yönelik Bir İçerik Analizi

Öz

Bu çalışma Türkiye'de yabancı dil eğitimi alanında 2005 ile 2015 yılları arasında yayımlanmış olan araştırma makalelerini incelemektedir. Çalışmada, amaca uygun örnekleme yöntemiyle belirlenen ulusal ve uluslararası dergilerde yayımlanan makalelerle ULAKBİM veritabanında yer alan 15 dergide yayımlanmış makalelerden ilgili olanlara yer verilmiştir. Her bir makale, katılımcıları, araştırma deseni, very toplama araçları, örneklemi ve very analizi bakımından bir 'Makale Sınıflandırma Formu' kullanılarak içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Sonuçlar, Türk İngiliz Dili Eğitimi araştırmacılarının çoğunlukla dil öğrenme/edinim, dil öğretme ve öğretmen eğitimi ile ilgilendiklerini ve çoğunlukla nicel araştırma desenini kullandıklarını göstermiştir. Uygulama boyutunda, likert tipi veri toplama aracı, lisans düzeyi öğrencilerden oluşan katılımcı grubu ve genellikle çıkarımsal analizlerden çok betimsel analizleri süreçlerinin yaygın bir şekilde tercih edildiği de görülmektedir. Bunun yanısıra, yabancı dil eğitimi ve uygulamalı dilbilim alanındaki araştırmacılar için tema, araştırma deseni ve istatistiksel süreçler itibariyle birtakım çıkarım ve öneriler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: içerik analizi; araştırma eğilimleri; eğitimde araştırma; İngiliz dili eğitimi.

AUTHOR BIODATA

Oktay Yağız is an assistant professor at Atatürk University, department of English language teaching at Erzurum, Turkey. His research interests are academic writing, applied linguistics and research methods in educational sciences. He has been carrying out research studies in these fields.

Burcu Aydın is an assistant professor at Adnan Menderes University department of English language teaching at Aydın, Turkey. Her research interests are neurolinguistcs, applied linguistics and English for specific purposes. She has been conducting research in these field in both national and international contexts.

Ahmet Selçuk Akdemir is an assistant professor at English Language and Literature department of Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University. He received his PhD at Atatürk University in 2013. He has published several research articles and book chapters. His research interests are ELT, L2 listening, technology in language learning & teaching, qualitative research in EFL settings.